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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Senior Research Staff on International Communism

Transmitted herewith are summary notes on a symposium on Sino-Soviet relations, held in Washington 26 March 1959. The symposium was intended to bring together a small group of government and academic experts for a free and informal discussion of the topic. It was not originally intended that the discussion be reported, but in view of the variety of opinions and interest which it developed, it was decided to transcribe the notes which one of the participants had taken. These may not be strictly accurate at all points, but in general they reflect the tenor of the discussion.

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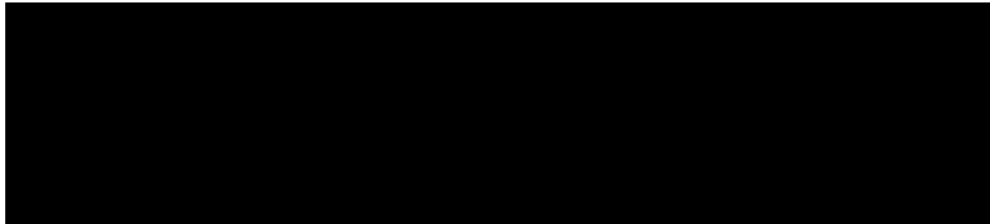
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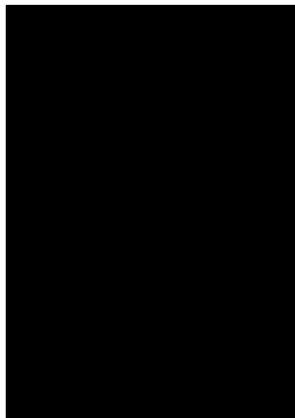
Symposium on Sino-Soviet Relations - 26 March 1959

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List of Participants:



25X1A9a Guests - Government



1. The present status of Sino-Soviet relations:
 - a. What frictions exist? How serious are they?
 - b. Specifically, are there territorial difficulties, differences of opinion on ideological interpretation, Communist methodology, and foreign policy?
 - c. Can we assume that ideological bonds and community of interests are keeping the Sino-Soviet alliance firm or is there any reason to believe that the two Red Giants are moving apart?

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opened the discussion with the proposition that the frictions which exist in Sino-Soviet relations are less serious than the ties of ideology and common interests which bind the two leading Communist powers. He stressed the general rationality which governs the actions and decisions of the Communist leadership on both sides and the firm determination to prevent any sources of friction from disrupting essential unity.

felt that November 1957 marked the end of "polycentrism" in International Communism and the return to the "monolith." In part, this was the result of the Soviet technological breakthrough symbolized in the first Sputnik. As a result, the Communists became more than ever assertive on the theme of a "decisive shift" in the world power balance. The Chinese Communists appear to have been particularly convinced of the reality of this shift and have emerged as the primary spokesmen of the monolith. The question for the Communists was how to operate from this altered balance of strength. The Chicom position stresses the use of aggressive means, but this tactic has not been fully acceptable to the Soviet Union and the satellites. The Yugoslavs have expressed doubt as to the reality of the power shift and have advocated a policy of prudent conciliation. It is possible that there has recently been some diminution in the general Communist conviction of the completeness of the shift, which is now regarded as still in process. The resulting conclusion seems to be that Communist strategy should combine aggressive and conciliatory tactics in some measure of balance.

pointed out that frictions always bulk large in relations among allied or closely affiliated nations. He noted, however, that the forces uniting China and the Soviet Union outweigh the elements of discord. China is not in a position to dispense with Soviet aid at this time, although this situation might change in the future. In the meantime, Tito may be a blessing in disguise to the Orbit by forcing the Soviet Union to try to prevent China from following his example too closely.

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██████████ dissented from the Tito analogy, suggesting that Yugoslavia is penned in geographically and could not expand, whereas China obviously could expand and therefore has vastly greater flexibility of policy.

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██████████ stressed the relative weakness of China compared with the Soviet Union and suggested that further technological breakthrough on the part of the latter might widen the power gap between the two.

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██████████ reverted to his thesis that both sides must play down their differences and try hard to avoid friction. He raised the question whether recognition of Communist China by the US might have a divisive effect. He doubted that this was the case, since he felt that the US had nothing to offer China comparable to the buildup which the Soviet Union is providing. Thus, we could give something of value to China only on the basis of actual concession, whereas the USSR can be of great assistance while following its own natural interests. ██████████ said that the USSR would back up China if it were attacked, but raised the question what Soviet policy would be if China became involved in hostilities over a country in its sphere of primary influence such as Taos.

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██████████ pointed out that friction would exist as a result of the superior international status of the Soviet Union; thus in the event of a summit parley China would be excluded from basic decisions such as cessation of nuclear testing and disarmament. He raised the question whether the Chinese Communists have subscribed to the XX Party Congress doctrine of the non-inevitability of war. ██████████ said that China still recognizes the weakness of its position and is willing to let the Soviet Union play the dominant role in international affairs for the time being.

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██████████ suggested that it is possible to over-emphasize the influence of one Communist state on another and cited the role of Ho Chi-minh, who has been rather more

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belligerent than the Chicoms. The fact that fallout from Soviet nuclear tests has descended on China may not be without future significance. Khrushchev has only endorsed the Chicom position on Taiwan twice and has not shown signs of going along on all points, including the obvious Chinese desire for nuclear weapons. There may also be tensions of a more intangible nature growing out of differences of ideological pattern. Chinese Communism has shown signs of depreciating technology and even an "anti-egghead" disposition (conducting vast projects with "millions of teaspoons"). The early stage of the "commune" movement clearly carried an implicit claim that China was "building Communism" and it was not until Ambassador Yudin's speech in November that the Chinese were forced to back down somewhat.

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[redacted] suggested that the role of ideological clashes within International Communism is confusing and unclear and may often be the cover for factional infighting. 25X1A5a1
[redacted] and [redacted] repeated that the divisive impact of friction was probably not serious and in any case the efforts of the leaders were concentrated on reducing it. These tensions are not "forces of nature" which are bound by their inner nature to increase. In any case the preponderant weight still remains on the Soviet side.

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[redacted] felt that the Chinese fanfare on the communes and the claims of "vanguard" action must have been displeasing to the Soviet leadership. Both sides have united in suppressing rivalry, although there may have been an emotional trauma of wounded Chinese pride exacerbated by the Quemoy setback.

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[redacted] again stressed the rationality of the Chinese Communist leaders and insisted that pride was a minor factor in their behavior.

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2. The nature of relations between leaders and parties:

a. How firm is the control of Khrushchey and Mao?

b. What would be the effects on the alliance of a change of guard in either Moscow or Peking?

c. What is the nature of relations between the CPSU and the CCP, and how close are the channels of communication? Would Peking take part in an international Communist organization of formal or informal character?

d. What is the outlook for the Soviet and the Chinese "model" in influencing the development of non-Communist Asian countries? How much will the Eastern European satellites be influenced by a strong Chicom?

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[REDACTED] felt that Mao's control was firmer than that of Khrushchev. Since the elites on both sides must be regarded as rational, a change of guard would not affect basic cooperation. With respect to the role of the two Communist parties, he felt that the Chinese was probably more meaningful as a "model" in Asia. In the case of the Japanese CP, strategy is still determined by the CPSU, but China is playing an increasing role.

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[REDACTED] was of the opinion that the satellites in varying degree have been impressed by China's economic boldness in experimentation, and by the rates of growth which have been achieved and projected. Although the CPSU has adopted a lukewarm attitude toward some of China's extreme claims, it may have been needled by them into the sharply advanced goals proclaimed at the XXI Congress. The Bloc may also have been impressed by a novel Chicom thesis: that the "social awareness" of the people can generate a quantitative change in production, ~~relations~~. At any rate Khrushchev has declared that "Communist construction" has entered a third "expanded" stage.

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██████████ referred to a human factor in the impact of China on the satellites: The creation of an image of a big orthodox Communist power which cannot be pushed around even by the Soviet Union. ██████████ also noted that the Chinese deviation from the Soviet model was influential in the satellites and was perhaps helpful in relieving them from direct Soviet pressures. Thus China provided a sort of moral-ideological support against the Soviet Union. ██████████ queried whether this impact might lie in a contrast of Chicom extremist solutions with Soviet gradualism.

██████████ turning to the "model" influence in Asia, suggested that non-Communist state governments of that area may find the Chinese example more feasible and suitable to their conditions, especially in the labor intensive approach to economic development. India has a different ideology and is perhaps more attracted to the Soviet example. In the case of Indonesia, the period of Moscow influence, especially from 1945 to 1948, had been disastrous. Since the Madiun fiasco Chinese CP influence has been strong on the PKI, although remaining in the background. Thus the Indonesian cadres avoid direct reference to China and stress the Soviet Union in their more open utterances but in the higher echelons and behind the scenes Chinese influence is probably stronger. The Chinese have taught the virtue of isolating smaller social elements and forces in order to concentrate their work against the enemy. Maoism has taught the PKI the virtues of patience and long-term action.

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██████████ distinguished between the influence of a "model" on parties and on countries in general. There are both inside and outside channels through which influence is transmitted and there is a strong irrational element among the new countries reaching out for the best and more advanced forms which in this case would be provided by the Soviet model. PAUKER contrasted this latter tendency with the practical attempt to reach for that which is accessible and meaningful

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in local terms - in this case the Chinese model. He felt that the explosive development of the communes may have created an element of terror by its sheer magnitude and by the strong preponderance of military factors in their development.

25X1A5a1 [redacted] added that in any case the Asian CP's were careful to emphasize, as was done in the USSR, that the communes are appropriate only to specific Chinese conditions.

25X1A9a [redacted] turning to the problem of international organization for the Communist movement, suggested that Moscow may be uneasy on this score. It is possible that the Chinese are more eager to set up some institutional form to coordinate or control the Bloc. 25X1A9a [redacted] mentioned the role of the Commonwealth or sodruzhestvo concept as a framework for a loose organization of the socialist system and [redacted] 25X1A9a pointed out that the Chinese had played a considerable role in developing it, especially from the end of 1956. [redacted] felt that the USSR might prefer to stress bilateral relations and give up centralizing institutions somewhat as we gave up UNRRA.

25X1A5a1 [redacted] raised a number of questions concerning the role of CEMA: Does the USSR really control it tightly and is it pushing it vigorously at this time? Why does Communist 25X1A9a China not play a closer role in the organization? [redacted]

suggested that CEMA has in fact grown firmer since 1957.

25X1A5a1 [redacted] thought that Khrushchev may be moving to increase the integration of the movement but [redacted] 25X1A5a1 quoted Moore-stene (RAND Corporation) to the effect that the Soviet Union is not really pushing economic integration seriously in the Bloc. [redacted] 25X1A5a1 suggested a broader term to the discussion of Soviet-Chinese relationships by referring them to the consequence of possible Free World actions and it was agreed that this topic would be brought up and discussed more fully (see below, Question 4).

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3. The future status of Sino-Soviet relations:

a. Which of the above mentioned possible points of friction could produce long-range "antagonistic contradictions"?

b. How will Sino-Soviet relations be affected if and when China becomes sufficiently industrialized to dispense with Soviet aid and if the communes turn out to be a success?

c. Will there be a serious competition between the two Communist countries over Asia, specifically Japan, South and Southeast Asian countries? Is a division into spheres of interest likely, with, for example, the USSR remaining "interested" in Europe and the Middle East and Communist China in the Asian areas? Could there be a clash over such countries in India or Indonesia?

d. How seriously is the USSR likely to be concerned with China's expanding population and could a population "explosion" lead to serious friction along the Chinese fringe areas?

e. Generally, what are the indications of either deteriorating, static or improving Sino-Soviet relations? Could there develop, in some decades, a veritable merger of the two countries, forming one gigantic Communist area embracing nationalities rather than nation states?

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██████████ opened the discussion of Question 3 on the subject (d) of the population "explosion." He cited numerous statements by the Soviets indicating that they are not afraid of population increase per se but he questioned whether they are sincere on this point and whether they would not be inclined to recommend birth control for China. ██████████ add- 25X1A9a ed that Khrushchev, when he is needled on the subject of Malthusianism, comes out in favor of the orthodox Marxist view.

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[redacted] broadened the point in discussion to consider whether the areas of possible expansion for both the Soviet Union and China are climatically suitable. As a broad generalization he stated that industrialized countries can out-balance agricultural and non-technological societies. The decisive point may be weapons superiority and, since the USSR holds this, a population "explosion" in China would not lead to dangerous friction.

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[redacted] suggested that there might be joint Sino-Soviet approaches to thin or unsettled areas in which China might provide the manpower for extensive build-up. 25X1A9a He cited the Amur Valley project in this connection. [redacted] stated that China in any case could absorb a large population increase within its present borders. [redacted] believed that the Chinese are motivated by the desire to retake the entire Manchu empire, some of which had been seized under the Czars. [redacted] referred 25X1A9a to the insufficiency of our knowledge concerning the basis of demographic fluctuations and suggested that just as we had under-estimated the future of world population in the 1930's, 25X1A5a1 so we may be over-estimating it today. [redacted] was convinced that in any case Khrushchev was not afraid of the population "explosion" in China for the near future.

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[redacted] raised the broader question how fast China will move in its attempt to catch up with the more advanced countries and suggested that this process might be very rapid. Even Khrushchev admits that China may eventually catch up with the Soviet Union, though without indicating how soon. A decisive point will be whether the Chinese can obtain or manufacture their own nuclear weapons.

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[redacted] discussing the role of family tradition in China, suggested that one consequence of the communes may be to cut down on the number of children. He referred to Mao's "covert" continuation of the process of emancipating women. Turning to the question where China could expand under population pressure, he cited the relative openness of Burma and Thailand.

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25X1A5a1 On the broader topics suggested under Question 3, [REDACTED] queried whether our policies need to be restricted to the opposites of conciliation or hostility. He suggested it might be possible to create situations of strength in which leverage could be applied to both parties of the Sino-Soviet axis. [REDACTED] queried whether the leverage would be stronger on the Soviets or on the Chinese and whether in fact we can manipulate the policy of the Soviet Union at all. In this connection [REDACTED] referring to 3.e., cast doubt on the longterm future of the traditional nation states in the eyes of the Communists. [REDACTED] was skeptical of any potential for creating a common brotherhood of man under Communism or any other system. [REDACTED] countered that while these are long-range thoughts, we must try to liberate ourselves from the pattern of nineteenth century thinking in terms of power politics and national self-interest if we wish to acquire a correct view of Communist political reasoning. We must deepen our study of Marxist-Leninist ideology and its impact on Communist policies and intentions; only if we do this can we produce sound analyses and reasonably accurate forecasts.

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[REDACTED] repeated his view that the effort of the two Communist partners to minimize their areas of friction had been fairly successful - witness the issues of a summit meeting, the communes and Quemoy in 1958. However it cannot be denied that there remain considerable areas of potential friction for the future. [REDACTED] felt that no really severe test on the stability of the axis had occurred so far. [REDACTED] added that progressive curtailment of Soviet freedom of action as Chinese power grows may induce increasing frustration on the part of the former. The ultimate result may be some sort of balance of power within the orbit itself.

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[REDACTED] saw no direct way to weaken the solidarity of the axis and felt that it was necessary to try to frustrate Chinese expansion by a policy of containment, emphasizing Southeast Asia.

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██████████ suggested that as the Soviet Union develops further in strength it may be increasingly unwilling to share the risks which Communist China incurs. He felt that rather than any merger or integration of the two nations within the Bloc there might be some new organizational structure bringing the CP's closer together. There might also develop serious power struggles within the parties. ██████████ added that 25X1A9a Khrushchev's personality may trouble the Chinese Communists as much as us. He might be willing to conclude agreements at a summit conference which it would be feasible for us to accept and which might have a divisive effect on his relations with Mao.

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Turning to other possibilities for positive action on our part, ██████████ suggested that we might go along with a de-nuclearization with the Far East. ██████████ added that it might 25X1A9a be possible to influence trade patterns in such a way as to syphon from the Soviet Union economic goods which the Chinese require. ██████████ suggested that a general regional program of containment of China in Southeast Asia was urgently required.

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(At this point it was agreed that the tenor of the discussion required a fourth question not originally placed on the Agenda, namely what the US and the West can do with respect to Sino-Soviet relations).
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4. ██████████ felt it essential that we consider very big possibilities in this field. As an example, he suggested that we might agree to concede the USSR a major sphere of influence in the Middle East as a price for assistance in the containment of China. He cited the continuing influence of World War II strategy on US policy, namely the primacy of the European theater of war over Asia. We might find it necessary to reverse this priority now and put Asia first. It might indeed be possible to break up the Chinese-Soviet alliance if we were willing to make massive sacrifices in Europe and the Middle East.

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██████████ raised the query how such massive actions could be possible within a democratic framework. The problem of Communism after all is not one of power politics but of ideology. We are confronted by a powerful expanding religion and the outlook is very somber. ██████████ speculated that if the Soviet Union were to enter fully the ranks of the "have" nations their attitude toward China might change substantially. 25X1A5a1

██████████ returned to his contention that even "fantastic" schemes should not be dismissed. We must do something to promote a deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations. He suggested the problem be broken down: (1) domestic situations of the individual countries, e.g. the communes in China; (2) foreign policy interests peculiar to one of the two countries but not to both, e.g. Berlin or Quemoy; (3) issues of interest to both countries. He suggested that the foreign policy curves under these two categories would not run parallel and would lead to different courses of action. 25X1A5a1

██████████ addressed himself to the question how we could speed up an ideological weakening of Communist ties and suggested that in broad terms we must concentrate on showing the discrepancy between ideology and reality. 25X1A5a1

██████████ queried whether time would in fact weaken this religion, especially in the case of China which he feels is still in a stage of first generation of revolution, whereas the USSR has gone on to the second. ██████████ repeated his conviction that ideological change can be brought about by policy processes and that we must make every effort to find out how to speed them. ██████████ felt, however, that such change could be brought about only by some form of economic disaster. 25X1A5a1

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██████████ thought that if Khrushchev were successful in the pending negotiations at Geneva in consolidating his European empire his dependence on Chinese support might weaken.